GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW AND JUSTICE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:172
ANSWERED ON:16.11.2016
Use of Drugs and Liquor in Polls
Gandhi Dr. Dharam Vira

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the measures taken by the Government and Election Commission to prevent use of drugs, liquor and money in polls and ensure free and fair elections in India especially in the upcoming election in Punjab; and

(b) the details of such incidents in the past and the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR LAW AND JUSTICE AND ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI P.P.CHAUDHARY)

(a)& (b): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN RESPECT OF PART (a) to (b) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 172 DATED 16TH NOVEMBER, 2016

(a) The Election Commission has stated that they are seriously concerned about the increasing use of drugs, liquor and money power in elections. The Commission keeping in view of forthcoming General Elections to the Legislative Assemblies of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur and Goa has taken the following measures: -
1. "Compendium of Instructions on Election Expenditure Monitoring has been issued to Chief Electoral Officers of all poll bound states including Punjab with the following salient features: -
(a) Appointment of Expenditure Observers and Assistant Expenditure Observers; deployment of Flying Squads and Static Surveillance Teams to keep vigil over movement of cash linked with candidates or political parties, or items of bribe meant for inducement of electors, including liquor and other illicit items during elections and their seizure
(b) Constitution of Media Certification and Monitoring Committee to keep a watch on media advertisements and suspected cases of paid news
(c) Maintenance of Shadow Observation Register and Folder of evidence in respect of each contesting candidate;
(d) Video Surveillance Teams to oversee major items of expenditure;
(e) Opening of separate bank account by the candidate for the purpose of election expenses and involving the Income Tax Department to keep vigil over movement of cash through the airports, hotels, financial brokers etc. in the Constituency during election process.
(f) The Commission has also issued instructions to all candidates and political parties to avoid cash transactions during election process. It asked all political parties not to incur expenditure in cash above Rs. 20,000/- (excepting certain exempted payments as mentioned in the guideline) and not to receive donation without name and address of the donor (excepting hundi collection during public rally). It also prohibits parties from cash payment to the candidates. The Commission, in the interest of transparency and accountability, has instructed the candidates not to receive any donation or loan in cash, in excess of Rs. 20,000/- from a single person or entity during the election process and to receive all donations/loans in excess of Rs. 20,000/- by A/c payee cheque or draft or by account transfer. The candidate(s) shall maintain the full name and address of such persons/entities in day−to-day accounts and abstract statement of election expenditure.
2. Chief Electoral Officers of five poll bound States have been directed to appoint Nodal Officers for Election Expenditure Monitoring in CEO's office (not below the rank of Additional/Joint CEO), State Police Deptt. (Inspector General of Police or equivalent rank), I.T. Department [Addl. DIT (Inv.) or equivalent rank] and State Excise Department (Excise Commissioner or equivalent rank) to the Commission. The Nodal Officers will have to co-ordinate with all Enforcement agencies, General/Expenditure Observers, Officers of the Commission and also with various officers/teams engaged in election expenditure monitoring during election period.
3. The Director Generals of Income Tax (Inv.) of poll bound States have been requested to appoint Nodal Officer of Income Tax Dept. [not below the rank of Addl. DIT(Inv.)] who will have to co-ordinate with all enforcement agencies, General/Expenditure Observers, Officers of the Commission and also with various officers/teams engaged in Election Expenditure Monitoring.
4. Keeping in view huge seizure of narcotics during the elections held in the recent past, the Commission has requested Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) to appoint a Nodal Officer in Narcotics Control Bureau Hq. for the forthcoming General Elections to the Legislative Assemblies of five States. NCB has appointed a Nodal Officer and he will liaise and co-ordinate with the Nodal Officers of CEO Office, State Police Deptt. State Excise Deptt. & Income Tax Deptt., all Enforcement agencies, General/Expenditure Observers, Officers of the Commission and also with various officers/teams engaged in election expenditure monitoring. The Commission has, further, requested NCB to appoint Nodal Officers in each poll bound States and to appoint their Officers exclusively in the districts of Punjab and Manipur sharing international border with Pakistan and Myanmar respectively for keeping watch on narcotics

trafficking/smuggling during election period.
5. Chief Electoral Officers of poll bound States have been directed to identify Expenditure Sensitive Constituencies (ESCs), Expenditure Sensitive Pockets (ESPs) and requirement of Expenditure Observers in the States.

(b) The Commission has stated that during the last General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Punjab, 2012 - Cash worth Rs. 11.51 Crore, Liquor worth Rs. 2.59 Crore and Drugs/Narcotics worth Rs. 54.00 Crore were seized. Further, during General Election to Lok Sabha, 2014 - Cash worth Rs. 1.04 Crore, Liquor worth Rs. 22.18 Crore and Drugs/Narcotics worth Rs. 783.44 Crore were seized in Punjab.